

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

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O 101405Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4831

INFO USIA WASHINGTON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE FREETOWN 0531

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PORS, SL

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT STEVENS REACTS TO STUDENT LEADERS

LONDON FRO SEITZ

REF: FREETOWN 0530

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. DAILY MAIL FEBRUARY 10 CARRIED
LEAD ARTICLE WITH HEADLINES QUOTE FBC STUDENTS SAY WE
ARE SORRY. UNQUOTE.

2. ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, STUDENTS OF FBC APOLOGIZED
TO PRESIDENT STEVENS FOR THEIR ATTITUDE SINCE THE
DEMONSTRATIONS SOME TWO WEEKS AGO. THE APOLOGY WAS
REPORTEDLY MADE BY HINDOLO TRYE, PRESIDENT OF FBC
STUDENTS UNION AFTER THREE ROUNDS OF DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN
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PRESIDENT STEVENS AND STUDENTS UNION REPRESENTATIVES.

3. THE ARTICLE QUOTED TRYE AS SAYING HE WAS ALARMED
AT THE VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM WHICH FOLLOWED THEIR
MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT ON TUESDAY AND DISSOCIATED
HIS COLLEAGUES FROM SUCH ACTS. IN A NATIONWIDE BROADCAST,
TRYE SAID QUOTE WE HAVE ASSURED HIS EXCELLENCY THAT WE

ARE NOT WORKING AGAINST THE INTEREST OF THE GOVERNMENT
AND THE STATE. UNQUOTE.

4. IN THE MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT STEVENS AND STUDENTS
YESTERDAY (FEBRUARY 9) ARTICLE STATED QUOTE THE PRESIDENT
BROUGHT HIS FULL PERSONALITY AND POERS DOWN HARD ON
THE STUDENTS. UNQUOTE. HE IS QUOTED AS SAYING QUOTE
WE HAVE REACHED A STAGE WHERE I AM GOING TO EXERCISE MY
CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY AS ELECTED HEAD. THE PEACE
AND QUIETNESS OF THE COUNTRY IS MY RESPONSIBILITY; WE
HAVE REACHED A POINT OF NO RETURN. UNQUOTE.

5. DR . STEVENS DENIED THE STUDENTS' AUTHORITY TO SPEAK
FOR THE NATION. QUOTE. IF YOU REPRESENT THE PEOPLE
GO THE THE POLLS....THOSE WHO REPRESENT THE PEOPLE HAVE
BEEN DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED. UNQUOTE.

6. CONCERNING THE SCHOOLS, PRESIDENT STEVENS WOULD
NOT TOLERATE THE DISRUPTION OF THE SCHOOL CALENDAR.
HE SAID, QUOTE, THE SCHOOLS (SECONDARY) WILL BE REOPENED
TOMORROW (FEBRUARY 10). FOURAH BAY COLLEGE IS OFFICIALLY
CLOSED AS FROM TOMORROW. UNQUOTE.

7. ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, THE STUDENT EXECUTIVE
SAT SUBMISSIVELY AS THE PRESIDENT TOUCHED ON THE QUESTION
OF GENERAL ELECTIONS, A POINT IN THEIR 13- POINT RESOLUTION
SUBMITTED TO HIM EARLIER. THE STUDENTS CALLED FOR FREE
AND FAIR ELECTIONS TO BE HELD WITHIN NINE MONTHS AND A
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT TO THAT EFFECT TO BE MADE NOW.
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ACCORDING TO THE PRESIDENT, THE STUDENTS HAD ASKED FOR A
JULY ELECTION BUT HE WAS CONTEMPLATING AN APRIL DATE.
QUOTE IF THE PARTY FAILS, I WILL GET OUT DESPITE THE
TWO OR MORE YEARS TO GO, UNQUOTE SAID DR. STEVENS. HE
SAID FURTHER THAT QUOTE HE WAS SADDENED BY THE STUDENTS'
ATTITUDE BUT THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS FORMED OF DULY
ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE UNQUOTE AND IT WAS
ITS DURY TO RESTORE AND MAINTAIN ORDER.

8. AT THIS POINT, THE STUDENT LEADER IS REPORTED TO
HAVE APOLOGIZED AND THE MEETING ENDED WITH QUOTE
VIGOROUS AND CORDIAL HANDSHAKES AND PROMISES OF GOOD
BEHAVIOR BY THE STUDENTS UNQUOTE. END UNCLASSIFIED.

9. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. EMBASSY COMMENT:
SEVERAL STUDENTS HAVE TOLD EMBASSY OFFICERS THAT TRYE
WAS ARBITRARILY HANDED PREPARED STATEMENT AND TOLD TO
READ IT. THERE IS EVEN A RUMOR THAT TRYE HAS BEEN
JAILED AGAIN. IF SO, THAT PORTENDS TROUBLE. AS FAR

AS WE KNOW, HOWEVER, STUDENTS HAVE NOT HAD OPPORTUNITY
TO REASSEMBLE TO EVALUATE MEETING AT STATE HOUSE
YESTERDAY AND THEIR ACTUAL REACTION TO BROADCAST
QUOTE APOLOGY UNQUOTE IS UNKOWN. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.
SAMUELS

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NNN

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